

POLYANDRY—MORALITY.

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for the practice of feminine duties, and of acquiring useful experience in the management of affairs. If the husbands should die, the widow would be fully competent to act as trustee of any cattle they may have left, and as guardian of her children, whether she married again, or maintained her single state.

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In the event of a woman not bearing any children to her husband, he may marry again: but in such case he must support the first wife: and, as a matter of course, he has to pay another dowel for the second.

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In possession, therefore, of these evidences of wedded life, and bearing in recollection the staid nature of this singular people, I feel convinced that separation between pairs is not lightly tolerated. Easy-tempered, thoroughly communistic, and not very nice in their discrimination of the duties of husbands and wives to one another, many of the causes which lead to separations amongst civilised people, must be absent from them, and motives for divorce would not be frequent.

What an insight does the simple practice of the dower, not give into the direct nature of their minds! Both parties *promise*, and the promise is their bond! It is not that it is a conscientious people, but so guileless and free from talent for plot, and all so much alike, that seemingly they possess almost intuitive knowledge of one another's intentions. We notice the same peculiarity amongst the inferior animals, and for want of a better word, term it instinct. I have often thought that much of this instantaneous understanding we observe in animals, as well as the rapidity with which, amongst nearly pure races of man, information is disseminated, and the unity of impulse with which they work in combining for a common end, is due greatly to close similarity in cranial contour.¹ Are any animals ever found associated in herds or troops?

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¹ This peculiarity was a remarkable feature in the Indian Mutiny of the year 1857; the rebellion of a semi-barbarous race, of striking uniformity of cranial development.

115 him to delve into the intimate details of tribal customs. He was also a very intelligent individual who fully grasped the interest of anthropological research, and was keen to make use of the results in the hope of improving the material condition of the Todas. Without his assistance, it is doubtful whether I would have acquired so penetrating an insight into the Toda way of life, something for which I am extremely grateful to him.

[589] Kanvarsathi's father was a rather notorious character among the Todas called Kiunervan (Table 14 of Rivers' genealogical tables) who had no less than eleven wives, one after the other. Kanvarsathi was the only son of the eleventh wife, and was born in 1905 at the Toda village of Paletkwar (known as Attakoraimand in the language of the Badagas) near Or, on the left-hand side of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road. Two months after his birth, his mother died, and his half-sister, Sinkup, later wife of Ujar (48, Rivers' Ushadz, one of my best informants), a daughter of his father's second wife, took him away with her and very grudgingly looked after him.

Six years later, Kiunervan also died, leaving one boy, Kanvarsathi, and two elder girls. The total number of his father's offspring had not been very great, despite the eleven wives. There were, altogether, only three sons and two daughters, of which two boys died before Kanvarsathi was born, and the two girls after, leaving him the sole survivor. Strictly speaking he became the only heir to his father's estate, which consisted, at the time of death, of sixty buffaloes and some gold ornaments – quite a considerable fortune according to Toda standards. But [554] because he was a minor, his father's brothers' sons – his first cousins on his father's side – took the property into their custody until he should come of age. Being, however, most unscrupulous, and believing that Kanvarsathi would never find out, these cousins gradually disposed of the estate to their own advantage, so that when the time came for them to hand it over, all that he got were six buffaloes and two pairs of ear-rings. [429]

115 When he was ten years old, he found out the real state of affairs and
691 how he was being done out of his legitimate inheritance. He appealed against this to the Toda Government Agent, the Monegar, and to the most influential Toda of his day, the famous Kuriolv (52, properly speaking, Kiusharf in Toda, the other name being Badaga), but to no avail. These important people could not be bothered with the complaints of so small a boy, and all he got for his trouble was to be made to look after their buffaloes. This unfairness deeply wounded him, and